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by Mrs Fairchild and we are sorry that she is not to be with us this morning. The carrying out of her plans has been entrusted to the charge of Miss Kroeger.

The first paper to which we are to listen is one on "The dear and dumpy twelves" by Mr HENRY E. LEGLER.

### THE DEAR AND THE DUMPY TWELVES; or THE LIBRA- IAN'S SHELF OF BOOKS

"Let me love the insides of books with Doctor Johnson, and have respect unto their outsides with David Garrick"—*De Witt Miller's bookplate inscription.*

Once upon a time, long, long ago, there lived in the goodly city of Strassburg a bespectacled German professor whose name was Sebastian Brandt. (His biographers do not mention spectacles, but a German professor minus a pair athwart his nose is inconceivable.) Looking upon the world through these glasses, the worthy doctor of philosophy marveled greatly that every person whom he saw, belonged to the tribe of fools. He gathered into one great vessel the various kinds of fools his observant eyes beheld, and sent them adrift in his heavily-laden "Narrenschiff." His story of the "Ship of fools" and its motley-minded crew has ever since been deemed descriptive of everyone but oneself, and perhaps that's why there's so much relish found in its ungentle satire.

Now this remarkable voyage occurred full four hundred years ago. There are some who profess to see in the opening verse a reference to a certain type of librarian. Manifestly this conclusion is erroneous, for the profession was non-existent then; the Alexandrian library—if there ever was one—had long since gone up in smoke, library schools had not been invented, and Mr Carnegie had not then begun his desperate and futile attempt to die poor. Nor is it likely that the professor's spectacles had the magic property of prophetic vision, for the worthy professor used them merely to mirror the men of his own time. There are those,

of course, who aver that in the mirror wherein the men of Sebastian Brandt's time saw themselves reflected, "the men of all times can recognize themselves," and that "a crew is never wanting to man this old, weather-beaten but ever-seaworthy vessel." At any rate, 'tis not uninteresting to recall in abridgement from the English version, the quaintly phrased autobiography of the "first fole of all the hole navy."

Styll am I besy bokes assemblynge  
For to haue plenty it is a plesaunt  
thyngē

In my conceyt and to haue them ay in  
honde—

But what they mene do I nat vinderstonde.  
But yet I haue them in great reuerence  
And honoure sauynge them from dust and  
imperfection

By often brusshynge, and moche dyly-  
gence.

Full goodly bounde in plesaunt couerture  
Of domas, satyn, or els of veluet pure  
I kepe them sure ferynge, lyst they sholde  
be lost,

For in them is the connyngē wherein I  
me bost

\* \* \* \* \*

For all is in them, and no thyngē in my  
mynde.

\* \* \* \* \*

Lo in lyke wyse of bokys I haue store  
But fewe I rede, and fewer understande.  
I folowe nat theyr doctryne nor theyr  
lore—

It is yngouhe to bere a boke in hande,  
It were to moche to be it suche a bande  
For to be bounde to loke within the  
boke—

I am content on the fayre couerynge to  
loke.

Why sholde I stody to hurt my wyt  
thereby

Or trouble my mynde with stody ex-  
cessyue,

Sythe many ar whiche stody right besely

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* note wel theyr diligence;

Ensue ye theyr steppes: obtayne ye such  
fame,

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* But nowe to fewe suche be.

Therefore in this Shyp let them come  
rowe with me.

Doubtless it was from this suggestion that some one was moved to write these warning words: "The librarian who reads

is lost." It may be doubted, indeed, that overmuch heed hath been given to the warning. Nathless, the librarian's reading may well merit some attention and discussion.

What shall the librarian read? How can a librarian serve his public in the largest sense, unless like a physician, he knows the properties of the ingredients he prescribes? Without that knowledge, without the skill that grows out of it, without the enthusiasm, which underlies the profitable use of it, without the love of letters which must be the basis for the spreading of it, the work of the librarian becomes but a meager and pitiful thing.

It was doubtless some maker of sounding phrases who sometimes, somewhere, declared that "the librarian who reads is lost." This profitless suggestion has been repeated in print and in word till it has come to have, by its reiteration, the very force of law, accepted and unchallenged. We are but too prone to subordinate sense to sound; in the volume of spoken sound, if it be but sufficiently plangent and insistent, we find an empty substitute for meaning.

One need not, indeed, have a taste as catholic as Charles Lamb's, whose book exclusions were limited to directories, pocket books, checker boards bound and lettered on the back, almanacs and statutes-at-large; one need not, on the other hand, limit bookish propensities to the advice given by crusty old Doctor Johnson—to collect one book. Neither is there need that the librarian should stock his shelf full with the hundred best books of literature—whatever these may be; nor that a special course of reading be pursued. His literary browsings must lead whither the fine relish of his taste may attract him. The well-thumbed volumes that he keeps for the pleasant reading that comes only between-whiles will serve to measure his worth as a librarian. If his personal books are of the vapid and the flabby sort, now issuing in such overwhelming and appalling profusion from our book factories, he will but scatter

about the microbes of his own virulent disease. If he steeps himself with the creative literature which time has tried and found good, he may perchance do something whereby the Thought Beautiful, as expressed in the Book Beautiful, may contribute toward an ultimate World Beautiful. Something of the spirit he may have which Austin Dobson gives wings in his poem.

#### MY BOOKS

(From "At the Sign of the Lyre," 1885)

They dwell in the odor of camphor  
They stand in a Sheraton shrine,  
They are "warranted early editions,"—  
These worshipful tomes of mine;—

In their creamy "Oxford vellum,"  
In their redolent "crushed Levant,"  
With their delicate watered linings,  
They are jewels of price, I grant;—

Blind-tooled and morocco-jointed,  
They have Bedford's daintiest dress,  
They are graceful, attenuate, polished,  
But they gather the dust, no less;—

For the row that I prize is yonder,  
Away on the unglazed shelves,  
The bulged and the bruised octavos,  
The dear and the dumpy twelves;—

Montaigne with his sheepskin blistered  
And Howell the worse for wear.  
And the worm-drilled Jesuit's Horace,  
And the little old cropped Moliere.

And the Burton I bought for a florin,  
And the Rabelais foxed and flea'd,—  
For the others I never have opened,  
But these are the ones I read.

The librarian should further heed, and saturate himself in, the traditions of his calling. And so a bit of his shelf may well be given to those books that make clearer to him the origin and development—and therefore the broader meaning—of the work which engages his activity, and should engage his interest. Out of this story, with its associations, will come to him that appeal for personal service that shall make his contribution, no matter what its degree, of greater worth. These books will recite to him the trials of the continental printers whose names survive in colophons; of writers and of

publishers, and of librarians, too, whose lives were spent in making the knowledge of the world the common heritage of the people. For the long struggle of these men to promote, and of others to suppress, the diffusion of knowledge among the masses, tells, after all, the story of unfolding democracy. And the end of that story is not yet ready for the telling.

In the shaping of that ending the librarian must do his part. And so there comes to him suggestion for a third line of reading—ephemeral in its nature, perhaps, but important as well. It is the current reading that puts him in touch with the work-a-day world and its problems; that will enable him to gather and to use judiciously, effectively, abundantly, the information whose lack has made for so much of incapacity in our public life. The librarian must strike root in the experiences of the past, but he must live in the present. Beyond the four walls of his building he must have the imagination to see the multiform interests and problems of the people who surround him, and to bring in application not alone the knowledge he has garnered, but to present it in such form that they may weigh its worth and make it serviceable and of good effect.

Thus will the librarian equip himself to achieve the ideal of his calling. And the main principle of the ideal, in the felicitous words of Mr Cobden-Sanderson, is this: "That whereas the labourer's labour, pursued in isolation is apt to appear, and in fact to be, a poor and monotonous occupation, a laying of bricks upon bricks, and nothing more, such labour, whatever it may be, when pursued with full knowledge of the logical association and cohesion of its processes, when pursued with the full knowledge of its cooperative and historical development, when pursued with full knowledge of its purpose and possibilities, will be found to contain within itself the elements of a lofty Ideal, well calculated to give peace to the imagination, and to the hand of the workman, inspiration and strength. Such

is the principle of the Ideal: However a man may begin, or whatever may be his point of departure, the supreme goal is still everywhere open to him."

The PRESIDENT: In other words, if the librarian who reads is lost, you had better all go and lose yourselves as quickly as possible.

The next paper deals only in part with the book. It also tells us something about the place and the man, which I think you will agree with me are almost equally important. The paper is by Miss SARAH B. ASKEW, of the New Jersey public library commission, whom we are very sorry not to have with us to-day. Her paper will be read by Miss Jessie Hopkins.

#### "THE PLACE, THE MAN AND THE BOOK"

Separated from the mainland of New Jersey by a bay is a long, narrow strip of land, which in the late spring and summer is the paradise of the fisherman and pleasure seeker.

In the winter time it is a wind-swept, wave-beaten, storm-ridden inaccessible wilderness. The only signs of life are in the little fishing villages, lighthouses and life-saving stations. Way down at the very end of the island, on a little spit of land, is a tiny hamlet. This little "cabbage patch" of houses bears the same name as the town to whose skirts it clings.

The town, itself, in the summer time, is a wealthy, exclusive resort; in winter it is a gaunt, deserted village. With the leaving of the summer visitors, the churches and schools used to be closed, the trains are cut off and the long winter siege begins. In winter, visitors are most rare, for to get there one must take a day's journey, change trains anywhere from seven to ten times, wait in most impossible places, endure cold and all the ills traveling mankind is subject to, and at last drive some four miles in the worst of weather.

The little village so cut off has to be

a world unto itself for six months. On one side of it the ocean roars, storms and pounds, black and threatening; on the other, not a hundred yards from high tide level on the ocean side, the waters of the bay surge, following the ocean's every whim. The winter wind blows across the unprotected land with augmented fury, piles the clean white sand in great hummocks, rattles and rustles the dry sedge grass, which adds its moan of protest to the bleak sounds. At the very land's end stands the lighthouse, and in its shadow the life-saving station. Huddling near them, in the shelter of the hummocks, are little fishermen's huts—tiny, high-windewed, low-roofed affairs, many of them roped down to hold them against the fury of the storm.

This is the place.

Great, bearded fishermen, old sea captains, young sailors, clammers and oystermen who seem to live in oilskins and sou'westers; women dressed so much like the men you can't distinguish them at fifty yards and who can dig clams, sail a boat, throw a line or do any man's work; girls and boys growing up as their fathers and mothers. They are rough, uncouth, bluff, hearty, whole-souled and as simple as children.

These are the people in outline; the sketch fills in as we go on.

The story of how the library was started and all such things as a church and a school were added to the village, is "another story." But just an outline to make the story clear.

When I first visited the town the summer people said that to get the "natives" to read was simply impossible. "Why, Miss Askew," said one of the Royal Line of Biddles, "they are simply the most thankless, degraded and hopeless set I ever saw. Why, last winter before we went away, I collected over a hundred of the most popular books I could find from the summer people, and when I came back this summer I found that not one of them had been read through. Why, to think of it! They would not even read the "House

of mirth," the "Masquerader" or the "Fighting chance." Now, you know it is hopeless."

In spite of everything my mouth twitched at the corners. Can you imagine one of those old fishermen sitting before a driftwood fire on a winter's night absorbed in the "Masquerader," while the storm raged outside? I couldn't. Nor could I imagine the girls who mended the nets and sailed the boats poring over the "Fighting chance." She saw my mouth and hastened to add, "But there were some serious books. Why, there was even 'Bryce's American commonwealth' and 'Riis's Battle with the slum.' Cap'n Jed said he read four chapters in Bryce's, just to please me; but what do you think he said? He said the thing was worse than the South Sea for being full of reefs and he no sooner got off one than he got on another."

This time I broke into a chuckle. Cap'n Jed was for many years a "deep sea fisherman," and rose from the very lowest place in the crew of a fishing smack to own his own boat. Then he was for many years Captain of the life-savers, and now is retired and lives in the old life-saving station, which the government abandoned for a new one when the ocean crept up to its very door. He is six feet two in his bare feet, he says, and more than broad accordingly—a very son of Anak. I could just see him with the book clutched in both hands, his feet wide apart, his horn spectacles on his nose, wrestling with Bryce.

However, blood will tell, for this descendant of the Biddles, after looking at me for a moment, broke out into a laugh, too, and said, "Well go ahead. I will give you a building." The money to refurbish and fix it was subscribed and the building was so large and so much money was subscribed that we had room for a school-room, a play-room, a pleasure-room, and a library-room; and, best of all, sliding partitions and chairs, so that the whole could be thrown together for a church and a lecture-room.

It seems strange to have a play-room and a pleasure-room. The play-room was for the children; the pleasure-room for the older folks to talk and sew and play games.

Then the money for books was raised, and they commissioned me to select them. I had always wanted to try an experiment, to select a library and with each book to have special people in view whose very names I knew and whose dispositions and characters I had studied, and to try to lead them from one book to another by some connecting link. Always heretofore there had been too many people or too many books. But this time I revelled in it. I got all of the people together. (There are only 175 in the little winter town.) We gathered around the big stove in the library. We told stories, and really and truly talked of ships and seas and many things. So friendly did we all get that Cap'n Jed dubbed me "Captain of the Book Ship." Their stories of wrecks and dangers and hairbreadth escapes were absorbing. Their whims, beliefs and bits of unexpected lore of the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the waters under the earth, were delightful and surprising. I found that these simple people, shut up there for so long each year, had a depth of mind and reasoning powers and a quaint, poetical and mystical strain far beyond most people you meet in what we call "civilization."

In this way I got to know them and I thought I saw the trouble with the books the year before. Down there in the winter, where nature is so big and the isolation so complete, and life so simple, the problems that come from an overheated, artificial life would not touch them at all. How could such a woman as Lily Bart, such a man as John Chilcote, interest them? Their struggles and trials would seem unreal and unnecessary. Bryce they did not understand. The slums they did not know and could not comprehend; therefore "The battle" lacked interest. Primal things, the man-to-man fight, primitive natures, people of uncomplex minds, folk-lore, nature,

the supernatural, myths and the mystical, and, it seemed to me, even Dickens, with his trick of making a person stand for one characteristic, would appeal to them.

When I had my books collected I went down to organize my library. This did not mean to catalog it. It meant to go over my books again and suit them to the people for whom I had bought them. Each book I had tried to have touch their lives somewhere. There were books on the stars that glittered in the wind-swept sky; there were books on the marvels under the stormy waters; there were books about the men who had sailed the ocean they knew so well; there were books about the lands visited by the ships they watched slip over the horizon; and books about men of might and valor; and books of poetry and quaint legends and myths. These were the books.

I did a great deal of cross referencing by means of lists and notes pasted in the backs of books calling attention to other books. Just what this was I will let my story show. The habit has come to me from Sarah Grand, and perhaps Mary Cecil Hay—that is, of giving a prologue of which the story explains: "A white face looks from the window. A sweet voice calls 'help.' Ah! doom of Lady Evelyn, the ill-fated bride of six seconds." This scene is explained only on the next to the last page in the book to be that she has sent the bridegroom back for her grand coronet blazing with seventeen diamonds, thirty-two rubies and divers lesser and yet precious stones. And "He hath not come, and the train doth start," she cries.

When the books were all arranged we gave a party to open the library. Everybody in town was there—in fact there were 176 people there. Old Cap'n Jed said "Cap'n, I caught a coast guard and brung him in." Cap'n Jed was the president of the library board and general adviser plenipotentiary to the town. His speech was something like this. "Gentlemen and all the rest of you and the ladies: It seems to me that the Cap'n

here's got her ship purty well in trim for a trial run; and if all on board is agreeable let's push her off with three cheers for the Cap'n, her ship and her freight—er meanin' these here books. Now for a speech from Cap'n an' sailin' orders."

I told them the books were theirs and what I wanted them to do with them, and how I hoped they would like them. Then, to try my plan a little and see how well I had judged them, I told them Dicken's "Child's dream of a star." The picture I will never forget. It was wonderful and pathetic. The place was lit with kerosene lamps that threw great shadows; the fire glowed in the stove; the little children sat on the floor at my feet; the older folks back of them, and the storm beat outside. The people pressed close to hear the story. Men, women and children listened breathlessly, great eyes fixed on my face, and tears, streaming down many of their rough, weather-beaten cheeks. At the end, for awhile, silence held. Then with a deep breath, "That sho' is purty," says old Cap'n Jed. The rest nodded and wiped their faces with their red handkerchiefs, like a man after a long pull.

I gave out the books that night myself, and told them a little of the men who wrote them and the men who lived them. The lives of Captain Kidd, Sir Francis Drake, Hale's "Stories of the sea," Stevenson's "Kidnapped" and "Master of Ballantrae" and "Treasure Island," Ingersoll's "Book of the ocean," Towle's "Magellan and the journey of Marco Polo," Scott's "Pirate," Ball's "Starland," Kipling's "Captains Courageous," Frothingham's "Sea fighters from Drake to Farragut," and Verne's "Wonderful tales" I knew would succeed. Then I had some for an experiment: Saintine's "Picciola," Repplier's "Book of famous verse," Spencer's "Una and the Red Cross Knight," Dickens' "Our mutual friend," Scott's "Ivanhoe" and "Rob Roy," Barrie's "Little minister," Blackmore's "Lorna Doone," Guerber's "Legends of the middle ages," Dickens' "Oliver Twist," Homer's "Odyssey," by

Butcher and Lang, Lummis' "Some strange corners of our country," Harris' "Nights with Uncle Remus."

These were only a few among the experiments, but were the ones I watched most, to see if there was really the vein in them I thought there was, that would touch these lives. I did not turn these books over to them without comment but tried, by relating an incident here, quoting a bit of poetry there, telling of a hero here, to catch their interest. In many of the books I had pasted slips telling of other books. Then I promised to come back in the spring and hear what they thought of the books and what books they had read.

To make the results shown and the criticisms made at this meeting mean more to you I am going to give the setting for the meeting, although you must pardon my following in the footsteps of Laura Jean Libby, who always has the soft spring wind to ripple the carpet of violets when her hero proposes and the storm to lash the trees to fury when the heroine returns to press her wan face to the cold stone doorstep of her paternal ancestors' brownstone house.

In going to my little hamlet, if you cross the bay in a boat from another little town on the mainland right opposite, you can make a trip in twenty minutes which takes two and one half hours by rail, as the only train must go up the bay to cross and down again. So the arrangement was made that when I wanted to leave the little mainland town I was to get the captain of the life saving station on that side to signal across. On the given day the clouds began to hang low on the horizon and the sea to turn a cold gray and give that little ceaseless moan that presages a storm. They told me not to try it, but I had promised; so we ran up the signals and across came Cap'n Jed in his little "sneak-boat." A "sneak-boat" is something like a canoe with a sail. It is covered over, all except just room to get in. I was put into a "slicker" and a "sou'-wester" covered my head and neck and I was then buttoned into the oilskins that cover the boat.

Says Cap'n Jed, "Should anything ever happen to you in one of these things first thing you do unbutton the oilskins." Reassuring, was it not? The sail across was fine, wind and salt spray in your face until your blood danced and breath came fast in joy of living.

When the Cap'n helped me out he says: "You're a plucky 'un, Cap'n; you kin come with me any day. As them town folks say, 'You're a dead game sport,' and I bet you kin steer that library ship into any harbor."

But, Cap'n" I asked, "Should I have been scared?"

He stared; "Didn't you know it, child? 'Er little more en we would er gone over." Another example of where ignorance is bliss.

I slept that night at Cap'n Jed's little house. In the best of weather at high tide it stands in the water on its stilted legs. That night it was high tide and the easterly wind blew a gale and the water rolled and thundered around under the house and the wind raged and tore the windows almost from their fastenings. It was glorious. The next day, in sou'-wester and slicker and top boots I visited; and Oh! the tales the storm brought to memory.

They would hand me the finest wine and say casually. "That come offer the ship wrecked here in 1903. The beach was strewed with wine casks and redwood from the Inlet to here. He took it and put it in the cellars of the summerhouses when them government fellows come down. I tell you it takes a smart 'un to ketch us." Or, "This here salmon come offer such and such er ship, etc."

The storm lifted that night and they all came to the little library building. Men women and children—every man Jack of them and child and woman Jack, too. We put the little fellows down on the pallet in the corner. The librarian showed me with great pride that since I had been there the 472 books I had brought had circulated 1610 times. There was not a single book that had not been taken out at least once. The favorites had been; Rep-

plier's "Book of famous verse," Kingsley's "Westward, ho!," Homer's "Odyssey," Dickens' "Our mutual friend," Ingersoll's "Book of the ocean," Andersen's "Fairy tales," Harris' "Uncle Remus," Pyle's "Jack Ballister's fortunes," Spencer's "Una and the Red Cross Knight," Tarbell's "He knew Lincoln," Verne's "Twenty thousand leagues under the sea," Abbott's "Queen Elizabeth," Van Dyke's "First Christmas tree," Raspe's "Tales from the travels of Baron Munchausen," "Stories from Wagner," Stevenson's "Treasure Island," Scott's "Talisman," Ball's "Star-land." The order of their popularity was as they are listed.

The popularity of Repplier's book was accounted for partly by the fact that in every book that could be possibly connected with a poem I had pasted a slip telling them to look the poem up, and, "the martial strains which fire the blood, and fairy music ringing in the ears, all these things these people loved."

That day, visiting them, I heard them quote a bit here and a bit there that showed they really loved it.

I asked one old fisherwoman why she liked it and she said, "Because when I am 'er mendin' nets the things sing over in my head." I found that this book worked two ways. The people besides referring to it to find a poem about a person, place or event that had interested them in their reading, often had been led on, by the swing of the verse, to read another poem, then becoming interested in the poet's theme had hunted up a book on that subject also. To facilitate this we had pasted in the back of the Repplier volume a list of books following out or explaining the half-told stories of the poems.

Kingsley's appeal is too apparent to call for explanation, for, as the young sailor said, "You just fergit you are 'er livin, here, but thinks you are him 'er fightin, the Spaniards there." surely this meant that he in spirit had sailed the Spanish main and fought with the crew of the gallant *Rose*.

I found that in hunting for books along the same lines and about the same people

he had read Towle's "Drake, the sea king of Devon," Morris' "Historical tales—Spanish-American," Edgar's "Sea kings and naval heroes," Abbott's "Naval history of the United States," Frothingham's "Sea fighters," Hale's "Stories of the sea," and Abbott's "History of Elizabeth," all of which were suggested in the back of "Westward, ho!" Of the fifteen people who had read "Westward, ho!" not one had read less than three of the suggested books also. The average had read one half of those listed in the back.

Homer's "Odyssey," with its stirring adventure and the masterful cunning of Odysseus, had greatly pleased them and there were many questions as to how much truth there was in the story. The tale of the old blind poet, and how the book had come down the ages, appealed strongly to them. Especially did they like the old rhyme,

"Seven ancient cities claimed the body of  
Homer dead,  
Through which the living Homer begged  
his daily bread."

Of the suggested books the average number read was a little over one half. Morris' "Historical tales: Greece" and Church's "Stories from Virgil" had been the most popular.

Ingersoll's "Book of the ocean" seemed to be so far down in the list because the people who took it out insisted on keeping it and reading it over two or three times and arguing between themselves as to whether the author was right. The consensus of opinion was, "He knew the darndest lot to know what he knew, like he knew it of anybody they ever knew."

This had led to the reading of Ingersoll's other books to see what "the durn fellow did know," besides many books of travel and nature.

So far as the children were concerned, I found that Andersen's "Fairy tales" had been in the position of the Teddy bear in the story where the little girl calls up the steps, in a mournful voice, "Mamma,

Granny wants Ted when you are through with him."

"Uncle Remus"—well I must admit that they read this first, because Cap'n Jed would never let it stay on the shelves, for if it was there when anyone came in he'd make them take it: "You think we are going to let the Cap'n's book not be read jes' as many times as any uv of the books." I think, however, they had caught a taste of it themselves, because they had dubbed one of their number "Bre'r Fox," "Cause he wux so smart actin' an' was always gittin' left."

"Our mutual friend" Cap'n Jed had read first, and he had forced it on his friends just like he did the 'Cap'n's book.'

I was hopeful, however, when I found that they had really read it, because you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink. Cap'n Jed's comment was: "Silas Wegg was sho' er pill; but didn't old Boffin han' him er lemon." The summer visitors had left their trail in slang.

Pyle and Verne need no explanation. Verne, however, created as heated a debate as to the authenticity of his facts as did Ingersoll. They agreed that "Them that hankered after plain facts better stick to Ingersoll; but for a hair raiser give 'em Verne."

How strongly the little book "He knew Lincoln" had affected them was voiced simply and pathetically by an old, old man, who nodded his head slowly and said, looking in the fire: "I wish I had er knowned him that er way." The amount of history and biography this little book had led them to read was wonderful. It had caused, directly and indirectly, the circulation of 62 books.

"Una and the Red Cross Knight" was a shot at long range, but it had hit the mark. One old man liked the poetry in it, because it was so full of fine, strange words that you could say over and over to yourself until they made pictures for you. From their comments I could see that the story, with its weird adventures, uncanny spirits, gruesome apparitions,

brave deeds and touch of old religion, had appealed most powerfully to these grown-up children. One old woman, with a fine belief in "once upon a time," assured me that these things used to be. A picture of Una and the lion now hangs on the library walls.

Van Dyke's "First Christmas tree" had taken a wonderful hold upon them. They seemed truly to have grasped much of the beauty and spirituality of it, for when one of them said, "After you read it you can shut your eyes when the wind's blowing so hard outside and it will all come over you again like something you saw once just so beautiful and good, it makes you want to cry." Was she not trying to say that it was "an exquisite word picture, full of the essence of spirituality?"

Munchausen they liked because he "was certainly the biggest liar you ever hearn tell of, en then, besides, he was such a good liar you didn't know sometimes whether he was lyin' or whether maybe he wuz tellin' the truth, and you wuz such a plain ijiot you didn't know he wuz er tellin' it." This book had led to the circulation of 36 books of travel and adventure.

Their strain of superstition and mysticism had found delight in the "Stories from Wagner." They, in whom the fog, loneliness and unfathomable riddle of the sea had bred many strange beliefs, revelled in the spirits that rode the storm, the mysteries that rose from the sea, the ghostly ship and her ghastly crew.

Of the stories, however, "Tristan and Isolde," "Lohengrin" and the "Mastersingers of Neuremburg" appealed to them not at all. Stevenson's "Treasure Island" would have stood higher in the list if the first readers had not held it so long for re-reading, for,

"Sailor tales and sailor tunes,  
Storm, adventures, heat and cold,  
Schooners, islands and maroons,  
Buccaneers and buried gold,  
Pleased them as they pleased the child  
of old."

They sang for me, "Seven men on a

dead man's chest" with a gusto and effect rather gruesomely realistic.

Their view of Scott's "Talisman" was most interesting; to a man almost those who read it disliked Edith Plantagenet and Berengaria, and frankly acknowledged to skipping the parts about them if they could. "They was always making trouble, going mooning around, dropping rosebuds, and taking a man away from where he ought to be." They liked Saladin best of all the men. "By jiminy, he cut a veil in two while it was er floatin' in the air. Anybody cud chop with an axe." (Alas for Richard Coeur de Lion) It seemed to me that this dislike of theirs for Scott's women was a rare criticism of these rather wax-like heroines.

Ball's "Star-land" had also caused much discussion and nightly gatherings on the beach in clear weather to prove the "gol dasted book." In the main they said he was right.

Now I am going to admit that there is another side to this story of mine, just as there is to every piece of tapestry. The wrong side shows the mistakes, the dropped stitches and the joining of the colors. If you get close you can perhaps find faults on the right side. I have put the right side of my garment before you, just as none of you would wear a coat wrong side out in order to discourage your friends from buying one by showing the alterations and little devices to make it fit. In fact, there is a lining in the coat to keep these very things from showing should the coat by any chance become turned. However, just as a friend might take another friend aside and show him the inside of his coat without its lining, with his devices and rough seams showing plainly, so that the friend *may not become discouraged* if his own coat looks like that before it is lined, I am going to turn the story for one moment.

Some of my 472 books, while they had not missed fire altogether, certainly had not hit the very center of the bull's eye. All of the people had read some book, but a few of them had read only one, more only two or three. Some of them who had

read, and with enjoyment perhaps, could not tell why they enjoyed or even read and had forgotten the books. Some of them liked only the simplest books. Some of them liked a book for a quality I had not sensed in it, and could not find the quality which I liked and thought they would like.

Now that you have had a glimpse of the wrong side I quickly turn the coat again.

I was more than pleased with the meeting and the result of my experiment. It certainly proved to my satisfaction that the great element of success in library work is the fitting of your books to your people. And to do this you must study your books and your people, both collectively and individually, one as related to the other. Then you must study your books as related to each other, so that every one in your collection shall fit in together as perfectly as the bits of marble in a piece of mosaic. There need be no sameness, for the more diverse the bits of color and shapes that go to make up a mosaic the more beautiful and valuable the work is when complete. Then your library as a whole should be constructed to fit your community, just as the mosaic itself is constructed to fit a special place in the building; and if this is done in the end it will fit in its place perfectly.

If you have ever watched an artist constructing with bits of cold stone a beautiful living picture you know that he works faithfully and carefully on the pattern from the wrong side and while he is working every inequality, every tint a little too dull is apparent to him as his picture grows, but he works on and on. And even when he finishes at last and looks down at the completed pattern he is not discouraged to see here a little crevice and there a little roughness, an open seam here, a tiny patch there where the bit of marble was too small. Now he pours his cement over it and smoothes it into every seam, and with faith puts his work to dry. Next day the pattern is turned and the perfect whole is given to view, needing only the polishing of a loving hand

to make it ready to slip in place. So we should work faithfully on our pattern, cement it together with ourselves, and polish it with human kindness; and lo! the work slips into place seemingly a perfect whole.

A few statistics to show what my results actually were from the books considered above as they were annotated. They had led in all to the circulation of 478 picked books, every one of which had been read to some degree intelligently. Of this number 58 per cent was travel, history and biography, 12 was nature and science, 10 mythology, literature and miscellaneous, and 20 per cent fiction. An average of 63 per cent of the books that were on the lists in the back of other books had been read and there was not a single book listed that had not been read by some one.

With one fine touch the meeting ended. As I started to step down Cap'n Jed raised his hand, and with one accord the people burst into "Dixie," and the will with which they sang it brought both tears and laughter to my eyes. Could there have been a finer thought to repay me for my trouble?

This was the place and these the men and the books.

The PRESIDENT: That is what the people are doing whom a prominent education official of one of our great states feared "might spend their time in the large towns and the good hotels just boardin' round."

Miss STEARNS: Mr President, I am sure everyone here wants a copy of that paper and I am also sure that all of us want to have copies of it to send to our friends, and if it is in order, I would like to make this motion at this time: that the Publishing board be requested to print one thousand copies of this paper for distribution or sale and, if possible, to add phonographic reproduction of its delightful delivery. Carried.

The PRESIDENT: The next paper is by Mr EDMUND L. PEARSON, to be read by Mr Harold L. Leupp and its subject is:

#### AN AMATEUR'S NOTIONS OF BOYS' BOOKS

In the book by Mr Edmund Gosse called "Father and son" there occurs the following anecdote told of a boy eight or nine years of age. The boy's parents left him very much to himself, and like other boys he found his way into the garret:

"The garret was a fairy place. It was a low lean-to, lighted from the roof. It was wholly unfurnished, except for two objects, an ancient hat-box and a still more ancient skin-trunk. The skin-trunk was absolutely empty, but the inside of the lid of it was lined with sheets of what I now know to have been a sensational novel. It was, of course, a fragment, but I read it, kneeling on the bare floor, with indescribable rapture. It will be recollected that the idea of fiction, of a deliberately invented story, had been kept from me with entire success. I therefore implicitly believed the tale in the lid of the trunk to be a true account of the sorrows of a lady of title, who had to flee the country, and who was pursued into foreign lands by enemies bent upon her ruin. Somebody had an interview with a 'minion' in a 'mask'; I went downstairs and looked up those words in Bailey's 'English Dictionary,' but was left in darkness as to what they had to do with the lady of title. This ridiculous fragment filled me with delicious fears; I fancied that my mother, who was out so much, might be threatened by dangers of the same sort; and the fact that the narrative came abruptly to an end, in the middle of one of its most thrilling sentences, wound me up almost to a disorder of wonder and romance."

A few years later he came into contact with other works of fiction. His father declined to allow him to read the Waverley Novels on the ground that those tales gave false and disturbing pictures of life, and would lead away his attention from heavenly things. But Scott's poems were permitted, and stranger still, under the circumstances, the novels of Dickens. Mr Gosse writes. "I recollect that my

step-mother showed some surprise at this, and that my father explained to her that Dickens "exposes the passion of love in a ridiculous light." She did not seem to follow this recommendation which indeed tends to the ultra-subtle, but she procured for me a copy of "Pickwick" by which I was instantly and gloriously enslaved. My shouts of laughing at the richer passages were almost scandalous, and led to my being reproved for disturbing my father while engaged, in an upper room, in the study of God's Word. I must have expended months in the perusal of "Pickwick," for I used to rush through a chapter, and then read it over again very slowly, word for word, and then shut my eyes to realise the figures and the action. I suppose no child will ever again enjoy that rapture of unresisting humorous appreciation of "Pickwick." I felt myself to be in the company of a gentleman so extremely funny that I began to laugh before he began to speak; no sooner did he remark 'the sky was dark and gloomy, the air was damp and raw,' than I was in fits of laughter."

I have quoted these passages because they form one of the latest published accounts of a very common experience—a boy's enthralment by imaginative literature. While it is safe to suppose that few boys begin their acquaintance of fiction with tales like that of the minion in a mask, or, on the other hand, are able so early to enjoy Pickwick, yet the emotion is much the same whatever the yarn. There is nothing like it. A boy's first trip to the land of story-books—it is like the first island landfall described in Stevenson's "South Seas" and all the other wonderful sunrises in fact and in romance. It is the privilege of many of the members of this Association to start boys, if not on their first trip to the land of wonders, at least on early voyages. The privilege is more highly valued than it used to be, and more wisely exercised. And it is well that it should be appreciated, for of all the tasks that fall to librarians, this is one of the pleasantest. Some of us are

charmed to have drawn the shop-girl from the level plains of Laura Jean Libby to the higher altitudes of Mr Howells. Others thrill with delight at capturing a genuine "workingman" and at sending him away enraptured with Trautwine's "Civil engineer's pocket-book." To me these joys seem pale indeed compared with opening the magic casements for others, and living over again, in one moment, the hours of happiness.

The small boy (and perhaps, the small girl, but I do not claim to know very much about her) is almost the only person left who is allowed to read for the pure fun of the thing. Those of us who are not engaged in an unblushing assault upon romance and fiction, are sheepishly apologizing for it. We are patting Dickens and Thackeray, forsooth, upon the back, and assuring them that they are pretty good fellows, after all. Led on by the necessity of appeasing "practical" trustees, we admit that we do have novels in our libraries, yes, and we are not ashamed of it either, but then, we have got lots of real valuable books that tell how to dig post holes, and shingle roofs. A magazine editor, in a moment of idleness, writes a space-filler alleging that libraries haven't as many books about potato bugs and traction engines as they should have, and a chill goes down the spine of the entire American Library Association. Of course, grown-ups do not read novels any longer for the mere pleasure of it. They do it because they are taking a course in English prose fiction, or they do it for "general culture" or "education," or some other noble purpose. And librarians read them to see if they are all right for other people to read. So in the rising tide of utilitarianism and pose there remains one small island, upon which is seated the small boy—almost the only honest reader we have left.

It is good to know that he is encouraged. The change has come in recent years. I can remember a librarian who always insisted on my taking home books "Spectacles for young eyes." He wished, you

see, to fit me out with eye-glasses before the natural course of misfortune did so. As I was afraid of him, I often took the book home; and, as soon as I dared, returned it,—unread. There were no children's librarians then, or I might have fared better. Improvements have been made in the treatment of boys in libraries, and improvements have yet to be made.

There are certain axioms concerning boys' books which it may be well to state. No one, I suppose, denies that a boy's book must have action, and that it must not preach. Another opinion, widely held, but not everywhere accepted, I am glad to say, is that these books must contain, somewhere, a "moral," and that they must, somehow, be "instructive." I am glad to say that the necessity of the "moral" is not everywhere accepted, for it would, of course, deprive boys of some of their best books, just as the same requirements would deprive adults of many of the noblest works of literature. As for the "instructive" element, it would seem to need no argument that the schools are cramming children too much already; that libraries are now assisting in school work (not necessarily in the cramming) and that if every story-book chocolate-drop must be accompanied by its cod-liver oil of "instruction," there is precious little joy left in life. Few libraries object to "Treasure Island," but how, except by the veriest cant, do you find either a "moral" or "instruction" in it?

If a boy's book is to have action it will usually deal with one of three things,—war, sport or travel. Some persons would exclude war from the list,—I believe that a well-meaning gentleman returned only last summer from a European trip spent in a vain endeavor to induce the makers of toy-soldiers to desist from their diabolical trade. It may be questioned whether the influence of certain books has not been exaggerated. Certainly, "dime-novels" have received more than their fair amount of blame. They have been made a scape-goat when the real cause of a boy's misdoings lay

far deeper. They are cheap and frequently dull, and no one wishes to see them in the public libraries. The amount of horror they cause many worthy people, is, however, absurd, and is frequently founded upon a complete ignorance of their contents.

An author who combines adventure with instruction in a curious fashion is Captain Mayne Reid. Some one has lately described his method. He will end a chapter, said this writer, with words after this fashion: "There was a rustling in the bushes, a low growl, and then the bushes parted before a terrible, hairy form. Jack gazed upon the open, foam-flaked jaws, the savage teeth, the glaring eyes. There was no doubt about it. With his last cartridge spent, Jack was confronted by that terror of the Rockies, the Grizzly Bear." So ends chapter 12, and you naturally turn the page in great excitement to see how Jack got out of this difficulty. But chapter 13 begins, "The Grizzly Bear (*Ursus horribilis Americanus*) is an hibernating animal,"—and so on for the entire chapter, about the manners and customs of the bear, while he and Jack are left glaring at each other, and you are in the most painful suspense. But the charm of this method is that all this "instructive" matter is in a lump, and you can skip right ahead to chapter 14, and find out how Jack slew the bear. For those whose interest lies chiefly in facts, I may say that I have been told by a man in a position to know, that Mayne Reid's statements about the wild lands that his books describe have never been found in any important degree inaccurate.

Do boys read Jules Verne now? There has been more or less talk about his being supplanted by Mr H. G. Wells, but I cannot believe that boys would prefer the Englishman. I used to think Captain Nemo the most magnificent of mysterious heroes. Jules Verne had a gallery of wooden characters, but their adventures were passing fine. I was very proud of a note which I once received from him, in

reply to one which I addressed to him in the French of Stratford-atte-Bowe. The books of Horatio Alger and his school do not, I believe, meet the approval of the modern children's librarian. I cannot shed any tears over his loss, for only one of his was familiar to me. I should be sorry to see Harry Castlemore packed off, however, and it does not seem that the librarians who banish Alger and Optic have a very strong position. There are not too many to take their places. Mr Trowbridge is still in favor, as he certainly should be, with his two excellent stories,—"Cudjo's cave" and "The three scouts."

The chief appeal that is made for the works of the late Mr Henty is that certain things can be got "out of" them. What I got out of the few I tried to read was weariness of the flesh. With their everlasting prefaces beginning "My dear Lads" and their stereotyped heroes, they covered a period from the dawn of time down to yesterday afternoon, and they blazed a trail of earnest mediocrity. Lowell says of Cooper's Indians that they are only Natty Bumppo daubed over with red. Mr Henty's heroes are one youth with a variety of costumes that might make the German Emperor envious. If Mr Henty had been alive at the time of the California earthquake, I suppose there would have been a volume from his pen within two days called "With Funston in 'Frisco," and there would have been a deal of useful information in it. I believe that many boys read the Henty books and like them, so it is a pleasure to know that they are considered "educative" and not likely to be cast out.

The two best books for American boys are "Huckleberry Finn" and "Tom Sawyer." There is a determined attempt in many libraries to keep boys from reading them. Like many attempts it is well-meaning, and like many well-meaning attempts it is entirely mistaken. In its inception and progress it has been largely a feminine movement. Nothing more clearly demonstrates the need for men librarians

to take an interest in boys' books; nothing shows better how women often fail to realize that boys and girls cannot be judged by one standard. Those who know and love "Huckleberry Finn" do not need to hear it praised. They realise that its author knew boys as very few have done. They know that it has furnished the inspiration for a number of more or less successful imitators. Mr Kenneth Grahame and Mr Kipling have both drawn upon it and the best parts of Mr Barrie's delicious play "Peter Pan" owe a great debt to it. It is literature in the highest sense, because it is a transcript of life. It represents boys not as Sunday School teachers wish them to be, but as they are, and those who condemn it for this reason must also, to be consistent, condemn the great realistic novels for adults. Some of its passages are never to be forgotten,—the description of Colonel Grangerford is as vivid a bit of writing as Thackeray's famous picture of Beatrix descending the stair-case. Of course, it must be admitted that there are lapses from the best taste in it, and a few things that we could wish omitted. But there is no great writer of whom this is not true, and for the mind that sees nothing in the book but vulgarity, what can be said, except that it indicates a prudery that would have probably abolished Shakespeare on account of a few passages objectionable to modern taste? Children's departments may condemn or "restrict" the book, but it will merely have the effect of sending the boys where they can get it,—either the adults' department of the same library, or elsewhere.

I have indicated a belief that certain improvements are yet to be made in the treatment of boys in libraries. One of these is a frank acknowledgment of the fact that books for entertainment are books for entertainment, and need not be sugar-coated pills covering the medicine of "instruction" or "morals." The Puritan idea is long-lived, but there is no more reason for insisting that books read for fun shall have a "moral" wrapped up in

them than in compelling boys before going in swimming to listen to a lecture on the theory of displacement of fluids. Men should have more to say in the choice of boys' books, and there should be more independence of judgment in the matter by both sexes. I have seen indications that the condemnation of a book by one or two persons prominent in children's libraries carries such weight as to lead others to ascribe the most fearful characteristics to the book without themselves really knowing much about it. Books that may horrify or frighten little girls do not necessarily frighten or harm little boys,—a fact not everywhere patent to children's librarians. Yet it must be said, by any one seeking to be fair, that the children's librarian of to-day is almost universally more sane and broad-minded than the librarian, either man or woman, of a past generation, and moreover, that there occasionally arise men, who for prudishness surpass the most finical woman who ever existed.

My strongest appeal is for the boy who reads "for fun" and tastes one of the great joys of life. A boy who was not very old eighteen years ago recalls capturing a certain English magazine which contained a story by his favorite writer. To make sure of reading it undisturbed he sneaked it away from the other boys who used to play in the garden of that house on summer evenings, and climbed up into a cherry tree. The twilight and his insecure position probably added to the effect of the story, but he is very sure that if he could have his choice between that hour over again or an election as librarian of the British Museum, the trustees of the Museum would have to look for some one else.

We may fancy that a crowd of boys once followed an old blind man about the streets of a seaport town. The old man told, or perhaps sang, in the custom of the day, the most wonderful stories about fighting men, who had crossed the seas, and fought for ten years about the walls of a great city.

Probably there were in that town persons who became alarmed at the spectacle. They went to the boys and said: "Do not listen to this old beggar any longer. I am afraid you will get a taste for fighting. These are dangerous stories,—they may lead you to form an Achilles Club, and sail off to fight with foreigners. Besides, what he says is probably not true. Come over and listen while some one or other talks about the habits of the honey-bees, or hear what the great philosopher Whats-isname has to say about cosmos. The sandal-maker who lives down by the wharf has invented a new way to fasten sandals,—come down and learn how that is done. These things would be useful and instructive—not full of false and dangerous ideas of life, such as the tales this blind man tells."

But the boys kept on following the blind man just the same, for they didn't have to learn what aorist passive means, nor yet iota subscript, before they understood him. He spoke their own language, and they wanted to know whether Hector or Achilles came out on top. They were just as much interested in all these adventures as the boys of another country thousands of years later are to hear of a boy and a negro slave who floated down the Mississippi on a raft and had exciting adventures on the way. And meanwhile we have a new set of theories about the honey-bees; the great philosopher Whats-isname has had his idea about cosmos upset and reinstated five or six times, and the wonderful invention of the sandal-maker is entirely lost, and would not do us much good if it were found. But the old blind man's stories, fictitious as they may be, and bloody as they undoubtedly are, survive, and the hearts of boys are hungry still for other stories like them.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure that has done us all a great deal of good. Now we have a paper on "Portraits of places" by Mrs Percival Sneed. (Mrs Sneed has been unable to reproduce her remarks for publication)

The PRESIDENT: We are next to listen to suggestions on "How to get Parkman read," by Dr Reuben Gold Thwaites.

Dr THWAITES: Mr President, ladies, and gentlemen: When Mrs Fairchild wrote to me asking me to participate in this program, which thus far has proceeded so brilliantly, she said, "Do not write a paper. We want simply a spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm!" Another distinguished member of the Association, who had more or less to do with this program, said to another person who is to participate in this morning's symposium, "We want the exercises this morning to be showy and striking!" I fear I must leave to others the business of being showy and striking and endeavor to extend to you only the enthusiasm.

A knowledge of history is of course intensely important. I need not argue that with you. Only by a knowledge of history may man reach successive plateaus of achievement. History being one of the most important of all human studies, it ought also to be one of the most interesting of studies; and yet I think that all of you will agree with me that history is not always sugar-coated. Not so long ago but what it is almost within the memory of those of us who have reached middle age, masters of literature wrote history. Such men as Macaulay and Gibbon and Hume made notable contributions to English literature, as well as wrote great histories. There has, however, sprung up in our practical days a desire for historical writing not of the broad, generalizing sweep such as was produced by great masters of literature, but histories of the common people, economic histories, social histories and all that sort of thing—some account of how John and Mary actually existed and what they ate in their humble cottage.

Supplying this new demand—or rather, perhaps, supplying the material for it—there have sprung up among us in the last fifteen or twenty years, seminars of history in the universities. From these institutions, necessarily (I suppose) dry-as-dust in their methods, come the monographic

histories that are flooding our market to-day. The monographists have discovered that the old masters of literature, in their brilliant pages that have appealed to us so long and so lovingly, are filled with error. The result is that the pendulum has swung the other way. We have in these days only monographic histories; and, sad to say, these products of the historical seminars, these results of the labors of the Ph. D.'s of history, are far from inspiring reading.

The pendulum has swung too far. However, I think there are now indications that the literary man is going again to be welcomed to the stage of history, and soon will once more be writing our histories for us. We are indeed most fortunate in having, in Francis Parkman, one great American historian who is not only a keen digger, a man whose histories would pass muster in the historical seminars of to-day, but is at the same time a master of the English language. Among the few great writers of American history, Parkman stands alone as the one whose products would pass muster in the seminars both of history and of the English language.

I have been asked to speak on how to get this man's works read. My recipe is very brief: the librarian must himself read Parkman. There is no one, I think, who appreciates fiction more than I do. Indeed, one of my chief pleasures in life, when I am not administering a library and writing history, is to read novels for the A. L. A. booklist. But at the same time I do believe that we have in Parkman's works a series of volumes that can be recommended to the young as being just as entertaining as any fiction that was ever written,—certainly as entertaining as any modern fiction, the sort that we are compelled to pass judgment on for the A. L. A. booklist. The great Irish poet, Yeats, has said: "The novel of to-day is the novel of to-day because it is not going to be the novel of to-morrow."

We have in Parkman a striking and in some respects a pathetic personality—a man of broad culture, great refinement, and a master of English. He started out

early in life, even when in college, to write history. His eyesight was seriously impaired while amassing the materials for his wonderful history of New France. Throughout his brilliant series of volumes, always in the background stands out the pathos of his situation. Sometimes for weeks, for months, almost for years, he sat in a dark room dictating to a stenographer. All his notes and material for his work, and these were infinite in detail and number, were read to him by another person. They laboriously were produced, those brilliant works that appear to have been dashed off in spontaneity, with the virile freedom of a man imbued with all the faculties of life.

Parkman's first book, "The Oregon trail", it is necessary to be familiar with, that one may understand the man. The history of New France stands out as an idyll and a tragedy. It is a completed thing in itself. Parkman was the first adequately to recognize its dramatic charm. But in order to understand the men and ways of New France—to reconstruct and redress his stage—he must fully understand the American Indian, one of the principal actors in this drama, yet really the least known of all. He lived among the Indians of the far Western plains for the greater part of a year, studying them closely in their domestic life, wearing out his eyesight in the smoke of their tepees, and suffering the various trials and disasters that would naturally overcome one in Indian camps. "The Oregon trail" is one of the most vivid pictures we have, of the American Indian as he is to-day or rather was a half century ago. Not Natty Bumppo painted red, but the actual aborigine as he was seen when white man first came amongst them.

The book is one that surely would appeal to every American boy if once the librarian might get it in the hands of that boy. Surely no child can read that book without having aroused within him an intense interest in the subject. It is not the Indian of Cooper, whom Parkman so graphically portrays. It is the real In-

dian in all his filth, in all his sloth, amid all his barbaric surroundings; nevertheless a man among men, experiencing joys and sorrows, having his virtue rewarded and his vice punished; it is all here, with its shadows and its sunlight. No book of Cooper's is so entertaining as this. It is not history nor ethnology sugar-coated. It is simply a vivid, real picture of men and women in the childhood of culture, living as they are. Just as we enjoy the men and women whom, this morning, we have seen in the little fishing village that has just been portrayed to us so eloquently and so graphically that their little lives have touched our heartstrings, so Parkman's Indians of the trans-Missouri become figures that have for us absorbing human interest.

The boy who has once read "The Oregon trail", and knows that that book is simply some of the background for the life that Parkman is going to portray for us in his later histories, cannot but want the next book, which is "The Pioneers in New France". Then, having seen his pioneers landed in and exploiting New France—the tercentenary of their landing was celebrated only two or three years ago on the banks of the Bay of Fundy—the lad will surely not be content until he followed his author into "The Old regime". In that and kindred volumes he will read of the life that was going on there in New France a couple of hundred years ago. He will read of men from the most cultured land of Europe coming to America, and upon the shores, amidst the woods and the swamps and the morasses of Canada daily associating with this barbarian whom Parkman so carefully studied in his "Oregon trail".

The story of that remarkable contact of the oldest and the most cultured civilization in Europe with the most barbaric and the fiercest aborigine that travellers had yet discovered, is told in Parkman's "Jesuits of North America" and in his "Old regime". His portrayal is so vivid a thing that you follow it eagerly from chapter to chapter. Parkman's heroes ex-

tend from the saintly Father Marquette down through the line of the self-seeking old French governors and the intendants. You read of grandly heroic men who went out upon the border and stopped the Indians in their annual forays against the log walls of Montreal and Quebec; you read the story of the Indian missions, as they were established upon the farthest frontiers of New France; you read of deeds of daring, of noble adventure for king and church. The heroes like Marquette the Jesuit, La Salle and Tonty the explorers, Duluth and Perrot the fur-traders. No master of fiction has made his characters stand forth with greater vividness than these.

Then there are the villains in the story,—the officials who were robbing the frontier posts, those who were setting up monopolies to squeeze out the very heart blood of the people, those who were despoiling the treasury in a hundred ways; the malcontents and the self-seeking. You can just see the end of it all coming as plainly as may be. And when at last the great political conflict comes, the titanic struggle of the two civilizations of England and of France, for the mastery of North America, Parkman tells the tragedy in his two culminating volumes, "Montcalm and Wolfe", in a manner no master has ever yet excelled. You follow it with an intensity, a breathless interest, that few novels have ever yet inspired.

The boy is always inquiring "Is it true?" He can safely be told that it is true, if it is in Parkman. The lad is a better man because he knows that these old heroes lived, he knows that this world about him in the interior of our continent was peopled with just such men, he knows that they were familiar with the rocks and rivers and ponds that he himself knows so well. There was Marquette, there was Tonty, there was La Salle, splendid old heroes they were, and villains too were at their work in Montreal and in Quebec and at the outposts of New France.

The story of New France, as told by

Parkman, is indeed a glowing tragedy. No boy can, surely, ever abandon it who has once read its opening pages; it surely must appeal to every healthy American boy. No other phase of American history has the same dramatic completeness as the story of New France, that Parkman has made his own. Other chapters of our history are jointed, we are waiting for the plot to culminate. We have, perhaps, only the study of the beginnings of things, which are to culminate in some future generation.

Enormous quantities of new material, unknown to Parkman, have been brought to light since he left us; yet so sure was his grasp, so masterly his imagination, that very little of what he did remains disturbed. We perhaps know the facts here and there a little more intimately; we may here and there differ with his conclusions; we may say, as I do, that his soul-inspiring "Jesuits in North America" is not in all points quite fair to the Jesuits themselves—for he was a New England Unitarian, and could not always forget his own views; yet after all the story is there, in its essential details, and will always appeal most powerfully to our imaginations.

But the topic is a fertile one, and I have but ten minutes. I am simply going to tell you: read your Parkman, and having read him, you will, I feel sure, do just one thing only—you will give it to the boy.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The next paper is by Miss ISABEL ELY LORD.

#### FIXING A PURPOSE

We should be less than human, I think, and surely if a librarian ceases to be human he or she is lost—if while we listened to that inimitable paper of Miss Askew's our admiration had not been tinctured a little with envy of her opportunity. We could not perhaps all do what Miss Askew did, but if we had only 175 people to deal with we could come nearer to getting the right book to the right reader at the right time than we could

possibly do when we have to handle people more or less in the masses. Toward the end of Miss Askew's paper she said that we must study our people, either collectively or individually. To those who are dealing with a larger number of people the study must be of the collective community, and in studying it, to try to find out what these people want that you want to give them. We find in a great many people a purpose of reading something that they feel to be more worth while than the new novels—reading what they call perhaps serious reading, finding out about some subject in which they have become interested or which they feel sure would interest them. There are many helps to this, of course. There are reading courses and home study courses of different kinds but they have almost all of them some disadvantage for most people. They are perhaps too long, or there are too many books in them, so that it is discouraging, or they require a certain amount of reading each day or they require a report on the reading at a given moment,—something that deters the people, that they draw back from, that they are afraid of and they hesitate to begin. If they begin, perhaps they stop after a little time and having once begun and stopped, it is doubly hard to begin again because of their discouragement. The library tries to help by publishing reading lists. If the reading lists are too long the help for the kind of people of whom I am speaking is not very great. If the reading list is short, if it is published on an attractive picture bulletin, if the list is at all effective, it discourages the people even more, for the first few people who come to the library get out the books that you have suggested and all of the rest of them are disappointed when they ask for them. Then they begin to feel that it is not worth while to try to get those books. Now what can the library do? We sought in our own library to meet this particular need. What is it that the people want? What ought they to have? First, they must have books that are good in matter. That goes without saying. It is not necessary to

discuss it. Second, a very much more important difficulty, they must have books that are good in manner. As Mr Thwaites has pointed out to you, it is not every historian that can write attractive English, we won't say good English, but English that is easy to read and that will lead people on to read. After we have found the book good in matter and good in manner and hunted a long time to find it, it must be a book that is good to look at, attractive to handle. Then when we have narrowed down our selection in any given subject to what seems to be a very small number of books to make a selection from, we must have it a book that can be arranged in some sort of a series, not a formal series but an arrangement so that several books shall be read one after the other and yet things shall not criss-cross. There shall be a certain leading on from one point to another. And, last of all, and not the least important, I assure you, (for I have been making the experiment) the book must be obtainable, be in print, the very best book for that purpose. Lastly, when the books are found, you must have them obtainable by the person who wants them, and the only way out of this difficulty seems to be to have a special selection of such books, a collection bought for that purpose and issued only to the people who undertake this for a reading course. I give you an account of one list that is actually ready to be started in October. It is on Egypt, a country which interests many people and which we have found people asking about. At the beginning of this experiment we must guess what people will like. We hope if the experiment is successful to have people tell us what they want and to get courses to fit their needs. We call this list "Egypt of yesterday and to-day," and underneath the title is the little quotation "A land of flame and fire." There are six books on this list of which two are novels. That is an unusual proportion. In the lists as we have planned them there will not ordinarily be more than five or six books,

and always that one is to be a novel and preferably that the last one of the six. Then the novel will be led up to in order that it may be better appreciated having the background of the books that have gone before. And perhaps in this company I might suggest that there is a possibility of the novel as a lure toward getting to the end. The first book in the Egypt list is Wiedermann's "The Ancient Egyptian doctrine of immortality." It may sound formidable but if you have read the book you know it is not. It is a slender little volume, admirably written, and it gives the essence of the Egyptian religion without which one cannot understand very well the monuments, history or the present condition of Egypt. Also at the beginning of the series there is a certain impulse which we feel sure will carry even people who are not used to serious reading through a little volume like this. The second book is George Eber's "Uarda," a book which fascinates even the young girl so difficult to interest in anything but a pure love story. The third book I mention with hesitation. It is Charles Dudley Warner's "My winter on the Nile," and I feel very sure that some of the people who take this course will not read all of that book. It is charming to those who care for Mr Warner's style. It has much very interesting information. Unfortunately there is no edition in print that is good and attractive, easy to hold and easy to read, and I think probably that the book will not be read as a whole. The next is Frederick Penfield's "Present day Egypt," a volume that we have found attractive in form, easy to read and very popular. The next is one of the best books of a journalist who wrote books, and in places it certainly comes very near being literature—G. W. Steevens' "With Kitchener to Khartum"—a book which has one chapter that should render it immortal, the one on the desert thirst. And the last book on the list is Sir Gilbert Parker's "The Weavers." Surely the person who reads this after the other volumes will enjoy it more than the average novel

reader possibly can. Wherever it seems practicable we are putting a small slip at the end of each volume to suggest further reading along the same lines.

We print little slips of the sort I hold in my hand, and no person can take the course without one—that is, in order to get the books they must ask for one of these lists, and will use it as a call-slip. It bears the name of the library, a list of books, and a serial number in the corner. We are numbering the lists as we issue them and keeping track of the number that ask for the last book so that we shall know how many finish the course. Books are kept in a special place; they have the library bookplate but have no library numbers on the outside. They are attractive new copies in the publisher's binding, as much like private books as possible.

I am not going to detain you with reading the other lists we have but I will just give you the titles. One is "Social conditions." We have not yet found a title that seems to us not too formidable for us. One is on "New York of to-day," its social, civic and industrial conditions. One is on the Civil War, a subject that is of constant interest. One is on the Great Northwest, one on the Art of living, one on the Child—for parents or those interested in the development of child life.

This is a very easy experiment to talk about because it has not been tried yet and we have only hope with which to look forward to it. If it fails, if we are mistaken in this method we shall seek for another of our own or one that someone else has worked out, for we feel sure that this purpose of which I have spoken exists, that there is some way of fixing it for the library and that if this is not the best way there is one yet to be found.

The PRESIDENT: The speakers in the two-minute talks will excuse me if I cut them off promptly at the expiration of two minutes, even if they are in the middle of a sentence. I will give each one warning twenty seconds before the two minutes expire.

#### Mr Bowker on "Mr Crewe's Career"

Mr BOWKER: The glory of the New England hills and the shame of American politics, the sweet breath of the pines and the malodor of political corruption, the contrast of light and shadow in Winston Churchill's "Mr. Crewe's career" and in his "Coniston" together with Paul Ford's "The Honorable Peter Sterling"—these three books may be spoken of as supplementary chapters to Bryce's "American commonwealth," on which they throw a rather lurid light, one filled with the development of the ring in American cities. Paul Ford's book, which was read I remember by an ex-mayor of the Tammany persuasion with such testimony to its reality that he endeavored in each case to fix the man who was described, the earlier book "Coniston" of Winston Churchill, dealing with the development of the country boss who became a state boss and made it warm for the railroads, and his latest book dealing with the railroad machine which has been forced to capture the state political machine in defense of its rights against the state bar,—these books are men's books; not that they are not women's books, but they are books to recommend to men and indeed to boys as well because, while they may be books with a moral, they are not books that stick the moral out too protrusively, the human elements are there, they are books to be read and to be recommended.

The PRESIDENT: That shows what you can do in two minutes. We will now hear from Miss Josephine A. Rathbone, on the "Dynasts" by Thomas Hardy.

Miss RATHBONE: It is perfectly unnecessary to attempt to analyze "The Dynasts" because all the book reviews from the Edinburgh review to the Saturday times supplement have been full of it for the last six months and all the people who read them, and of course that includes all of you who are here, know all about it. So you know it is a drama not to be acted but to be read, of the Napoleonic era of about 1805 to 1815, in three